

Literacy Activity Ideas

Beach, Island, & Ocean Themes

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Activity & Craft Ideas

- ☐ Aquarium: Set up a fresh or salt water aquarium in the classroom. Involve the children in each stage of planning.
- ☐ Alphabet: 1. Children use their fingers to trace letters in a container with sand. 2. Make sand paper letters for children to trace with their hands & fingers. Children say the name of the letter while they are being traced.
- ☐ Beach Bingo: Bingo Cards with Beach & Ocean themed illustrations.
- ☐ Chart: Animals Groups and What They Are Called? What are the nouns used to describe groups of animals? Schools of Fish, Den of Lions, Flock of Geese.
- ☐ Chart: Can You Eat It? Chart sea creatures that are commonly eaten and those who aren't and why.
- ☐ Chart: How Low Do They Go? Make a chart that shows the different ocean depths where different fish & sea creatures live. Draw and label the fish & creatures.
 - Surface Area: small fish
 - Middle Depths: quick moving fish, streamlined body shaped fish, predatory fish
 - Bottom/Floor Area: slow moving fish, fish that hide or blend in with the ocean floor, flat fish, fish that eat food that collects on the bottom of the ocean floor.
- ☐ Chart: Fish Food Chain - Who Eats Who? Smaller fish are commonly eaten by larger ones. Who eats who?
- ☐ Chart: Fish Versus Humans! Draw a human and fish outline on poster board. Chart the differences between fish and humans. IE: Fish breath through their gills and humans breath through their lungs.
- ☐ Chart: Fishing Anyone? Chart the different types of fishing and the different catches for each - fresh water, ocean shore, deep sea, etc.
- ☐ Eatable Shoreline Craft
 - marshmallows "ocean"
 - blue food color
 - crushed graham crackers "sand"
 - pretzels "drift wood"
 - chow mien noodles or sprouts "sea weed"
 - candy rocks
 - dried fruit bits "shells" & "coral"
 - fish crackersMelt Marshmallows in aluminum pie plates. Mix in blue food coloring to make it "ocean". Create a shoreline scene.
- ☐ Feed The Shark:
 - Photos or illustrations of sea creatures: shark, jelly fish, whale, turtle, etc.
 - Cards with words that give the same beginning sound as a sea creature. ie: For Shark: shell, sheep, shovel, etc. For Turtle: toothbrush, tongs, toes, etc.
 - Attach sea creature photos/illustrations to a small box or container.
 - Children "Feed The Shark" (or the Turtle, etc) by placing the corresponding beginning sound card into the correct box.
- ☐ Fish Market: Visit a fish market. How many different sea creatures do they sell? Where to they come from? What are the prices per pound? What is the most popular choice that people in your area purchase? How long does the food stay fresh in the store? What are the nutrients that humans receive from sea foods?
- ☐ Fish Scales: Look at fish scales under a microscope and count the rings to determine the age of the fish. Draw and label the scale.
- ☐ Great effects for Sea Creature crafts:
 - Add sand to paint for texture.
 - Put cornstarch in paint for shiny crabs.
 - Put crushed cornflakes or cornmeal in paint for starfish.
 - Use a cheerio for a suction type mouth.
 - Blow different colored bubbles onto white construction paper sea creature shapes.
 - Sponge paint sea creatures.

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- Sprinkle salt on the wet paint, when it dries it creates patterns.
- Cut sea creatures from sand paper. Children will color on the rough side, using various colors. The harder they color the better. Turn it over onto white paper and press with a warm iron.
- Color wax paper with blues and greens. Cut in waves and use in layers for water in an ocean picture.
- Use a blue styrofoam food tray for creating an aquarium scene. Cover tightly with clear plastic wrap. It looks like you are looking through the glass into an aquarium.
- Fill a bowl with round colorful confetti. Make fish shapes from construction paper. Cover one side of the fish with glue and dip the glue side into the bowl of confetti. Shake off the confetti that isn't stuck with glue. Make an ocean scene with several of these fish.
- Paint using sea shells, dry kelp, dry sea weed, dry starfish, etc.
- Create designs in play-doh using sea shells, starfish, etc.

☐ Gyo-taku Fish Art: Use a very flat fish that has been washed with soap and dried. Place the fish on several layers of newsprint with the fins and tail spread open. Paint the fish with a small brush and acrylic paint. Paint against the "grain" of the scales and then paint over to smooth it with the "grain". Place cloth or paper onto the fish and rub gently but firmly. Peel the cloth or paper slowly away to avoid smudging. Do some trials and examples before taking this craft into the classroom.

- ☐ Hula Skirt
- brown paper grocery bags
 - scissors
 - yarn
 - stapler
 - paint, markers, glitter, etc

Cut the bottom of the paper bag. Cut strips leaving enough at the top to fold it over for a waist band. Fold the top over, putting the yarn inside the fold. Staple the top closed to

hold the yarn in around the waist. Decorate the "grass skirt" and use the yarn as a belt for tying.

☐ Leis

- string
- colored straws cut into 2" pieces
- cupcake papers or construction paper
- glue
- scissors
- hole punch
- markers, glitter etc.

Draw & cut flowers from construction paper, or trim the edges of cupcake papers to resemble a flower's edge.

Hole punch a hole in the middle of each flower. Add glitter and designs on the flowers.

Cut a string for the lei. Thread it through a flower then a straw, next a flower then a straw, etc.

Tie the two ends together for the lei necklace.

☐ Ocean In A Jar

- clear jars with lids
- sand
- plastic or rubber sea creatures & plants
- rocks
- water
- salt
- hot glue gun

Place sand, rocks and creatures in the bottle or jar. Fill with salt water. Hot glue the lids shut and display on a window sill.

☐ Ocean Scene Tortillas

- flour tortillas
- cream cheese "water"
- blue food color
- round golden cracker "sun"
- sprouts "sea weed"
- fish crackers

Children decorate their tortilla with "water" at the bottom, the "sun" at the top, and the fish and sea weed in the water.

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☐ Poetry, Alliteration and Adjectives:

- Give children this format:

Pirates, Pirates, Pirates!

_____/_____/_____
Pirates!

_____/_____/_____
Pirates!

Pirates, Pirates, Pirates!

- Give children a letter and have them come up with adjectives to describe the Pirates.
 - "c": cold, cunning, careful Pirates!
 - "d": dark, dangerous, dimpled Pirates!
- Change the topic from Pirates to another noun. ie: Sharks, Whales, Fish, etc.
- Have children recite their poem with emotion and exclamation!

☐ Sea Creature Origami

- ☐ Sea Creatures: List which creatures in a story are fish and which are not fish. Look up and discover the important characteristics of each sea creature that makes it unique.

- ☐ Sight Word Beach Ball: Write sight words on a Beach Ball. Form a circle and toss the ball. Which ever word the right hand is touching is the word to be read out-loud.

- ☐ Silhouettes: Make silhouettes of a variety of fish shapes. Label and display. Color wax paper in blues and greens, cut in waves and use in layers for water of your silhouette fish display.

☐ Sunken Treasure Sand & Water Table:

- Materials: Small rocks spray painted gold, plastic ships, sand & water table.
- Hide the gold in the sand for children to find.
- Explain how many pirate ships sank due to over loading of cargo.
- Have children determine how many gold rocks are needed to sink the ship.

☐ Sweet Octopus

- large marshmallows
- "Twizzlers" licorice

Separate the Twizzlers into strips. Count out eight for the legs. Stick them into the marshmallow for a sweet octopus treat.

☐ Treasure Map or Treasure Hunt Activities

Decor & Visual Image List

- ☐ Beach Balls
- ☐ Beach Volleyball
- ☐ Sand Castles
- ☐ Sand Pails & Scoops
- ☐ Surf Boards, Sail Boats. Rubber Rafts
- ☐ Fishing Boats, Fishing Nets, Lighthouses
- ☐ Submarines, Aquarium, etc
- ☐ Luau, Leis, Tropical Flowers, Grass Skirts
- ☐ Palm Trees, Coconuts, Bananas, Pineapple
- ☐ Goggles, Flippers, Snorkel, Swim Suits & Caps, etc.
- ☐ Beach Umbrellas, Chairs, Towels, Hats, Visors, Flip Flops, Sun Screen, Sun Glasses, etc.
- ☐ Shipwreck, Message in a Bottle, Pirates, Treasure Hunt
- ☐ Sea Shells, Star Fish, Sand Dollars, Seaweed, Crab, Hermit Crab, etc
- ☐ Fish, Octopus, Shark, Squid, Jellyfish, Seahorse, etc.
- ☐ Monkeys, Tropical Birds, Crocodiles, Sea Turtles, etc.
- ☐ Whales, Orcas, Dolphins, Seals, Walrus, etc.
- ☐ World Map which gives an emphasis on the vast oceans, islands, shorelines, etc.
- ☐ Quotes: "Beware of Sharks!"; "No Life Guard On Duty!"; "Hang Loose!"; "Surfs Up!"; "No Fishing Off The Pier"; "No Diving Off the Pier"; "Life's A Beach!"; "Shiver Me Timbers"; "Swab the Deck"; "Walk the Plank".
- ☐ Movie Themes: Finding Nemo, Sponge Bob, Little Mermaid, Swiss Family Robinson, Peter Pan, Treasure Island

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Decorations

- ☐ Many department stores do a Hawaiian promotional theme. Contact the manager for left over decor items that can be donated.
- ☐ Blue table covers spray painted with white "waves".
- ☐ "Grass Skirt" table skirts
- ☐ Lantern Streamers
- ☐ Palm Trees, Inflatable or paper
- ☐ Tropical Flower Streamers
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Music

- ☐ Beach Boys
- ☐ Caribbean Music
- ☐ Hawaiian Music, Hula Music
- ☐ Rock Instrumentals Classic Volume 5: Surf
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Menu

- ☐ Fruit Kabobs
- ☐ Snow Cones
- ☐ Ocean theme Jell-O Wigglers.
- ☐ Cut fruit roll-ups into seaweed shapes.
- ☐ Plastic sand pails to hold food items with shovels used as serving spoons.
- ☐ Sail Boat: Use short celery sticks filled with cream cheese and a triangle cracker for the sail.
- ☐ Sea shell pasta, cooked and tossed with butter and parmesan cheese.
- ☐ Blue Jell-O with Dole Pineapple Sea Creatures Shapes. Pour into individual clear cups. Add a little whipped cream on top for some waves.
- ☐ Ocean Pudding: Vanilla pudding can be "water" when blue food coloring is added. Nilla Wafers can be "sand" when crushed. Add gummy fish to the "water" and a small drink umbrella to the "sand".
- ☐ Octopus Hot Dogs: Slice a hot dog in half about 2/3 the way up. Slice the halves in half again, and again for 8 sections. When boiled, the "legs" curl up.
- ☐ Cupcakes: Blue frosting for water, Teddy Graham with a gummy life saver ring.
- ☐ Cupcakes: Light brown frosting, crushed graham cracker for sand, Air Heads taffy for towels and Teddy Grahams sun bathing.
- ☐ Turn a plain white round cake into a scary pirate's face by drawing eyes, nose, mouth, and mustache with an icing tube. Next, place a plastic eyepatch over one eye, and add two gold-colored bangle bracelets on each side of the cake to resemble earrings. Serve the cake on a platter covered with a red bandanna.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

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Prizes & Incentives

- ☐ Gold Fish Crackers
- ☐ Gummy Sharks & Sea Critters
- ☐ Sun Glasses
- ☐ Bubbles
- ☐ Small Beach Balls
- ☐ Beach Toys
- ☐ Sand Pails & Shovels
- ☐ Crazy Straws
- ☐ Straw Hats
- ☐ Pirate Eye Patch
- ☐ Gold Chocolate Coins
- ☐ Behavior Chart: Pirate Ship titled "Don't Walk The Plank!"
- ☐ 8 Rules of the Classroom written on Octopus' legs
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Party Games

- ☐ Fishing Wall
- ☐ Water balloon toss
- ☐ Hula Hoop Bean Bag Toss
- ☐ Beach Balls tossed through hanging Hula Hoops.
- ☐ Limbo, Hula Dance Lessons, Hula Hoops
- ☐ Do the limbo with actions from sea creatures: swim like a fish, walk like a crab, slide like an eel, pinch like a lobster, etc.
- ☐ Pin the Surfer on the Wave, the Monkey on the Tree, The Coconut on the Palm Tree, etc.

- ☐ Musical beach towels (like musical chairs).
- ☐ Crab "soccer" with a beach ball: Children walk on all fours, but upside down "like crabs". Two teams compete with a beach ball like a soccer game with a goal and goalie.
- ☐ Surf Board Relay: Balloons of white, blue & light blue (the waves) fill up a relay corridor. Skate boards are used to "surf" through "the waves" to the goal object. The object to retrieve can be something like a banana or coconut. "Surfers" bring that object back to the next surfer. Play upbeat surfing music during the relay. Surfers can wear monkey masks for added humor.
- ☐ Sponge Bob Relay: At the starting end have a bucket of water and a large sponge for each team. Put a bit of food coloring in the water, each team can have a different color if desired. At the opposite end is an empty/ clean gallon size plastic milk jug. The opening can be cut larger if desired. The object is to see which team can fill up their milk jug the fastest using the water filled sponge for the relay.
- ☐ Beach Bum Relay: A relay where the object is to get dressed in the provided beach attire (beach hat, towel, sun glasses, etc) and run down the relay course with a beach ball between the legs.
- ☐ Name That Creature! Prepare a bag with several photos of ocean creatures. Pull them out one at a time. Who can name the creature?
- ☐ Ocean Treasures Scavenger Hunt: Hide photos, drawings or actual objects of "Ocean Treasures" (shells, starfish, seaweed, etc.) Instruct children to find one of each kind. Once they have found their treasures, they can proceed to color, identify and/or create a collage of their Ocean Treasures.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____